

Message Text

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66

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 OMB-01 AID-20

PC-04 ACDA-19 LAB-06 SIL-01 EB-11 RSR-01 /148 W

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P R 092250Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4823

INFO AMEMBASSY QUITO

USCINCSO

DIA

DOD

AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 3007

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINS, PINT, MILI

SUBJ: MILITARY STAGE ARMS RAIDS

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

REF: SANTIAGO 2976

1. SUMMARY. AIR FORCE AND NAVY UNITS WENT INTO ACTION SUNDAY IN SEARCH OF ARMS. RAIDS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO AVOID POTENTIAL CONFRONTATION WITH ALLEGEDLY ARMED WORKERS. GOVT CLAIMS NO ARMS FOUND AND IS DENIGRATING OPPOSITION REPORTS OF ARMED WORKERS AS FALSE AND ALARMIST. OPPOSITION KEEPS ITS PROPAGANDA MACHINERY TUNED UP ON THEME. END SUMMARY.

2. IN OBVIOUS RESPONSE TO INTERNAL PRESSURES AND CONTINUING OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN ABOUT ILLEGAL ARMS, AIR FORCE AND NAVY UNITS STAGED PREDAWN RAIDS ON SUNDAY JULY 8. SEARCHES DESIGNED TO AVOID POSSIBLE CONFRONTATION WITH ALLEGEDLY ARMED WORKERS. IN SANTIAGO, ABOUT 200 AF MEN AIDED BY THREE HELICOPTERS DESCENDED UPON THE DESERTED MUNICIPAL CEMETERY, OPENING
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GRAVES AND MAUSOLEUMS. IN VALPARAISO, NAVY DETACHMENT SEARCHED

DINAC (GOVT WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTION AGENCY) WAREHOUSE. BOTH RAIDS ORDERED BY RESPECTIVE SERVICE JUDGE ADVOCATES UNDER POWERS GRANTED MILITARY BY ARMS CONTROL ACT.

3. OFFICIAL GOC SPOKESMAN, INTERIOR UNDERSECY VERGARA, LATER REPORTED THAT SEARCHES HAD REVEALED NO ARMS AND ATTACKED "IRRESPONSIBLE AND ALARMIST" ACCUSATIONS THAT WORKERS IN OCCUPIED FACTORIES HAVE BEEN ARMED. TODAY'S "EL MERCURIO" (INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE) REPORTED THAT FACH HELICOPTERS HAD BEEN SEEN LEAVING CEMETERY WITH LARGE, HEAVY CASES. GIVEN CHILEAN SENSE OF HUMOR, GHOULISH JOKES ALREADY MAKING ROUNDS.

4. ARMS ISSUE TOOK UNEXPECTED TURN WHEN POLICE DISCOVERED ARMS IN OFFICIAL CORA (AGRARIAN REFORM AGENCY) CAR INVOLVED IN SANTIAGO TRAFFIC ACCIDENT. OPPOSITION PRESS DESCRIBES FIND AS "ARSENAL." "TERCERA" (INDEPENDENT) REPORTS THAT CAR WAS CARRYING TWO PISTOLS, AMMUNITION AND 60 DYNAMITE CAPS.

5. WHILE UP PRESS AND GOVT CONTINUE TO DOWNPLAY CHARGES OF ARMED WORKERS AND ISSUE OF FACTORY SEIZURES, OPPOSITION ELEMENTS ARE STAYING ON THE ATTACK. IN JOINT STATEMENT, SEN PRES EDUARDO FREI AND CHAMBER PRES PARETO CHARACTERIZED CURRENT SITUATION AS OF "EXTREME SERIOUSNESS," ARGUED THAT PDC (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS) DO NOT DESIRE NATIONAL CONFRONTATION OR CIVIL WAR, AND STATED THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR AVOIDING THIS LAYS SQUARELY WITH EXECUTIVE WHICH MUST, INTER ALIA, ALLOW ARMED FORCES TO DISARM WORKERS, PROMULGATE THREE AREAS CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND OTHERWISE RESPECT AUTHORITY OTHER BRANCHES OF GOVT.

6. IN OTHER EVENTS, FIVE PATRIA Y LIBERTAD ASYLEES FLEW TO QUITO EVENING OF JULY 6. PCCH SEC GEN CORVALAN REAFFIRMED TO PARTY CONGRESS THAT WORKERS MUST HOLD ON TO SEIZED FACTORIES FOR PRESENT (SEPTEL). SEAMEN'S STRIKE SUSPENDED (SEPTEL). HOWEVER, IN PAID NEWSPAPER ADS TRUCK OWNERS THREATENING STRIKE CLAIMING THAT GOVT HAS NOT CARRIED THROUGH ON PROMISES MADE AT TERMINATION OF OCTOBER SHUTDOWN REGARDING SALE OF NEW TRUCKS, SPARE PARTS, ETC. JULY 9 "LA SEGUNDA" REPORTS THAT LT GUILLERMO GASSET OJEDA WHO PARTICIPATED IN JUNE 29 COUP ATTEMPT AND THEN DISAPPEARED FROM SIGHT HAS SURFACED IN THE PARAGUAYAN EMBASSY
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WHERE HE IS CLAIMING POLITICAL ASYLUM.

COMMENT. IF GOC STATEMENTS ARE TRUE TO EFFECT THAT RAIDS UNCOVERED NO ILLEGAL ARMS, AIR FORCE AND NAVY HAVE, UNINTENTIONALLY, BOLSTERED UP CONTENTION THAT ILLEGAL ARMS FUROR NOTHING BUT OPPOSITION HOT AIR. ACTIONS, NEVERTHELESS, MUST HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED BY RESPECTIVE CINC'S AND THEREFORE CAN BE READ AS CONSTITUTING CLEAR AF AND NAVY INDICATION TO GOVT THAT MILITARY

PREPARED TO TAKE STRONGER STAND AGAINST ALLEGED ARMING OF
WORKERS. RAIDS ALSO PROBABLY TEND TO PLACE SOME PRESSURE ON
ARMY TO COME UP WITH SIMILAR ACTION OF ITS OWN.
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